

# 'Spirit' Gone and Scientist Going

By JOSEPH V. PHILLIPS  
Virginian-Pilot Staff Writer

PORTSMOUTH — A scientist studying reports of flying objects in a Florida Avenue home wrapped up his investigation Sunday by saying the house is not haunted. But he could not give a reason for unusual incidents that began there 10 days ago.

William G. Roll, project director of the Psychical Research Foundation, Durham, N.C., said the incidents stopped four days ago and that their cause must be sought in living persons. He will leave today for Durham after making recommendations to the family involved.

The parapsychologist Sunday held a press conference in Hotel Governor Dinwiddie before newsmen, microphones and television cameras. He discussed happenings at the home of Charles Daughtry, 74, Mrs. Annie Daughtry, 78, and their great-grandson, Cleveland Harmon, 12.

## 3 INCIDENTS

He said three incidents occurred while he studied the case—a stone was thrown in the backyard, a china cabinet glass door shattered, and a china ornament on a mantelpiece fell to the floor of the house.

Roll said, "In no instance was

I able to make a definite conclusion regarding the cause of the event.

"In field investigations in general, and in this case in particular, it is difficult to reach any conclusive judgment about the phenomena studied. The only thing that can be said with any assurance is that there is nothing in the house itself to cause the phenomena. The things only happened when the house was occupied.

"In other words the cause must be sought in living persons. However, it is not safe to go beyond this statement. That is to say, it is not possible to state whether the events were produced in normal ways or by a parapsychological process."

Parapsychology deals with events that cannot be accounted for by natural law.

In answer to a question he said, "As far as I know, no one has observed any appearances of deception and fraud."

## COULD RESUME

He noted that such unusual incidents often are short-lived, but there can be no assurance the incidents will not resume.

Roll said the investigation was hampered by widespread public interest in the case which upset the "psychological conditions in the home." He said it was therefore difficult to conduct a satis-

factory scientific investigation.

He said, "Before I go, I shall, of course offer the family certain recommendations that may help them. However, my main purpose in coming here last Tuesday was that of the investigator. I wanted to explore the possibility that psychokinetic energies (mind over matter) were involved and to learn about the conditions that trigger them."

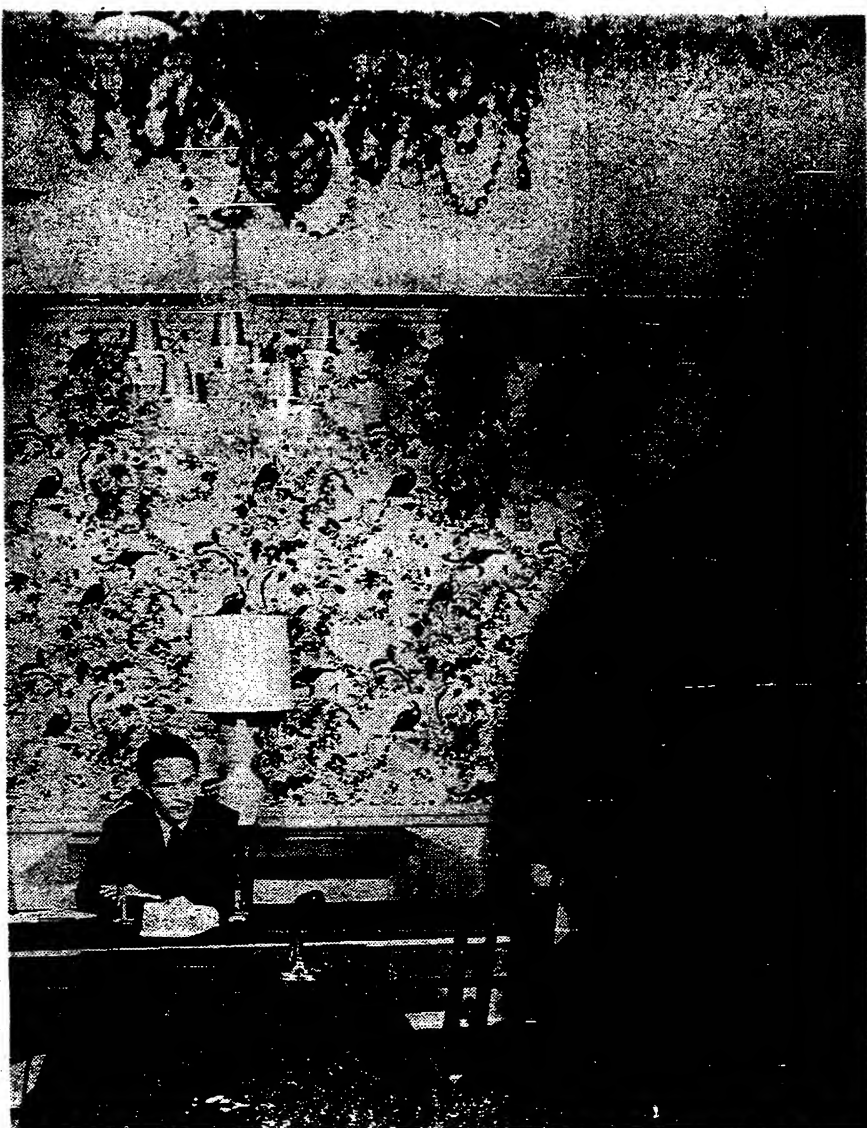
## CROWDS HINDERED

The parapsychologist said he could not exhaust all the research potentials of the case because of crowd interference. The family was more concerned with disturbances from outside

the home than from within, he said.

Police said the house was wrecked by human intruders Saturday night. Roll said, "I should like to make a plea to the public and to public authorities to inform parapsychologists directly whenever such outbreaks occur. Only in this way will science be able to reach an understanding of these puzzling phenomena, and only in this way will it be able effectively to aid the unfortunate families involved."

He praised Portsmouth police for their work in keeping many intruders away from the house while the investigation was underway, and thanked newsmen for leaving him alone.



Virginian-Pilot Photos by Brown

Roll at his press conference Sunday. The spectral figure in the foreground is that of a television newsman.



Bystanders look for ghosts through the broken windows of 949 Florida Ave.

## Furniture Flies Again, 2 Charged

PORTSMOUTH — Two people were charged with burglary and destroying private property early Sunday after police said they broke into a "haunted house" looking for treasure and left it a shambles.

Elvis Butch Jr., 34, of 2718 Turnpike Road and Mrs. Ethel Gray, 51, of 2532 1/2 Phillips Ave. were arrested by Portsmouth police. Butch is a city forest department employee. Mrs. Gray is a maid.

Police Capt. G. E. Gardner said the two told him they broke into the house at 949 Florida Ave. in a hunt for money and hidden treasure they believed was there. Police said Butch entered through the back door about 10:30 Saturday and let Mrs. Gray in the front door.

Police said furniture was broken and several household items, including a sewing machine and dishes, were tossed out of the house.

## WENT OUT WINDOW

Butch was slightly injured when he dived through a window on leaving the house when police arrived.

Butch and Mrs. Gray were jailed pending a preliminary hearing in Municipal Court this morning.

## Lime and Salt Recipe

## Holes Heist the Geist

PORTSMOUTH—In case the little fellows bother you, here's a poultice for poltergeists.

It's the exclusive recipe of William Brown of 1036 Middle St., who says he "guarantees there won't be a ghost in there" once you try it. It goes this way:

Take one haunted house. Carefully drill two holes in the floor, one just inside the front door, one just inside the back door. Take some white lime and put a little table salt in it. Sprinkle the mixture around the drilled holes.

Brown didn't say what you should do if you happen to have side doors in your house, but insists he has tried it in haunted houses . . . "and it works."

But if it doesn't, don't blame Brown. And don't set out bowls of milk, either. That's for leprechauns.

## Grappling P.A. Ghost, Police Rout Recalled

VIRGINIA BEACH — Poltergeists? Nothing new to 74-year-old E. W. Burroughs of Virginia Beach, who says he had a nodding acquaintance with one for 56 years.

It began in 1900, near Sigma in Princess Anne County, Burroughs recalled, when pillows were snatched from beneath his head and that of a boyhood friend who was spending the night.

It ended six years ago, when Burroughs and the same friend, Henry T. Stone, received a visit from a naval officer and his wife. The poltergeist picked up the couple and sent them floating across the room.

In between, Burroughs said, he and Stone met their particular poltergeist six times. Once they tried to trap it by closing all doors and windows, allowing the spirit to enter by the stovepipe hole in the roof, then sealing the hole with a thick piece of cardboard. "Everything was quiet," Burroughs related. "Then Stone yelled: 'He's got my hand.' Before he could be reached, he'd been dragged under the bed and the cardboard torn in two."

That was in 1906. Other encounters, said Burroughs, took place in 1908, 1910, 1914, 1916 and 1925. He said the poltergeist threw people around, tossed furniture,

treated policemen with disrespect, made one man think he had ice down his back, and made strong men helpless.

Burroughs said the geist only appeared when he and Stone were together. Since Stone's death in 1958, there have been no incidents. In 1953, Burroughs published a pamphlet relating his and Stone's poltergeisting, and listing the names of more than a dozen witnesses. Their experiences were similar to the recent ones of the Daughtry family in Portsmouth, in which no one was physically harmed, and in which witnesses were present.

One evening in 1910, Burroughs, Stone and some friends were together in the old Neddo Hotel in Norfolk. The poltergeist paid a visit—with noise enough to bring complaints.

"I knew we were making noise," Sam Beskin, one of the occupants, recounted in Burroughs' booklet. "We were being tossed across the room."

The police — a sergeant and two patrolmen — soon arrived only to be tossed across the room, too. Drawing their guns, they began a careful search — and were thrown "as far as the wall would let them go," Beskin said. The policemen ran away.

On Independence Day, 1925, Burroughs and Stone first communicated with the poltergeist by setting up a system of raps to mean yes, no, or I don't know. This done, Burroughs said, seances were held now and then in which the geist made some accurate predictions.

Burroughs doesn't believe a teen-ager must be present for a poltergeist to appear. He says he was 60 when it happened to him. While he prefers fishing to sessions with spiritualists, he admits "I am thoroughly convinced we are surrounded by a living intelligence that guides our daily activity."

The last recorded poltergeist in Virginia threw bottles and bricks around the 100-year-old home of a Baptist minister in Petersburg in 1949.

Before that, there was 1938's "bouncing Bertha," in Powell's Mountain. Here, a nine-year-old girl was bounced all over her bed. Before the geist was done, the sheriff, the Commonwealth's attorney and the Board of Supervisors was involved.

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On the off chance the assailant

threw away the weapons after the attack, the police combed the area for clues.

## WATER-FILLED SAND PITS

The search was concentrated Sunday in the swampy waters and water-filled sand pits ringing the area.

The swamp is just beyond a clump of woods and near a beanfield where the assailant sexually abused Sandra Lea Jernigan of Bayside, then stabbed her in the throat.

Miss Jernigan, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lea H. Jernigan of 1602 Terrace Ave., Bayside, was in fairly good condition late Sunday in Norfolk General Hospital.

Dead is James H. Futrell of 3543 Westminister Ave., Norfolk.

## NEGRO IN DARK CLOTHES

The assailant was described by Miss Jernigan, a telephone operator, as a Negro man in dark clothes. Police were unable to question her further Sunday because of her condition.

Miss Jernigan and Futrell were standing by his car at the end of a dead-end road off Barretts Corner Drive, located about a half-mile east of Military Highway off Indian River Road, when the assailant accosted them. He asked them what they were doing on private property. Then he pulled a large caliber gun and shot Futrell once in the stomach and again in the head after he fell.

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